

Gillette, Liz

From: Margaret Watt <mwatt@swrmhb.org>
Sent: Friday, March 06, 2015 8:21 PM
To: AppTestimony
Subject: Fwd: Fw: Preserve Funding for RMHBs

March 6 mental health hearings

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Patricia Schumacher" <Patricia.Schumacher@greenwichct.org>
Date: Mar 6, 2015 5:34 PM
Subject: Fw: Preserve Funding for RMHBs
To: <mwatt@swrmhb.org>
Cc: "George O'Loughlin" <GeorgeO'Loughlin@greenwichct.org>

Hello Margaret, Unfortunately I didn't make deadline to submit written testimony today. However, I have sent a version of the following to local legislators. I hope it helps!

Patsy Schumacher, LCSW
Greenwich Department of Social Service
101 Field Point Road
Greenwich, CT 06830
(203) 622-3719

----- Forwarded by Patricia Schumacher/GOV/GreenwichCT on 03/06/2015 05:32 PM -----

From: Patricia Schumacher/GOV/GreenwichCT
To: <ivy.floren@housegop.ct.gov>
Date: 03/06/2015 05:31 PM
Subject: Preserve Funding for RMHBs

Dear Representative Floren,

I am writing to you with urgency requesting that you oppose the governor's current budget which stands to eliminate the Regional Mental Health Boards in Connecticut.

My name is Patsy Schumacher and I work as a Case Manager at Greenwich Department of Social Services, specializing in assisting clients who have mental health and substance abuse problems. I am also a registered voter in Stamford. As coordinator of the Greenwich Mental Health Providers group, I know first-hand the incredible work that is done, specifically by the Southwest Regional Mental Health Board.

With few resources, the SWRMHB supports Mental Health through many Southwestern Connecticut communities. Their accomplishments are many! To name a few: They have supported and promoted May is Mental Health Awareness efforts including an eye-opening, video awareness campaign. They created a wellness resource for young people called Turningpoint.CT which promotes wellness in a technology platform to which our teenagers are drawn. They have championed and taught both QPR (a suicide prevention program) and Mental Health First Aid in English and Spanish. They have sponsored any number of informational events including film showings such as "The Anonymous People", "No Kidding Me Too" and "Haze", all of which promote recovery efforts and help to de-stigmatize mental health and substance abuse issues. Last year, SWRMHB provided the vision to move from simply running Depression Screenings to a more engaging "Check Your Mental Health", thus promoting wellness and recovery rather than simply identifying illness. They are working in partnership with Yale Research students to better identify the barriers which inhibit or prevent people from obtaining the care they need. Many essential functions are provided by the RMHBs at low cost to Connecticut.

Please oppose any cuts to the Regional Mental Health Boards or any other DMHAS-funded Mental Health Services in the governor's budget. As a matter of dollars and cents, the RMHBS costing \$584,000 helps to bring in \$23 Million in Federal funding. Eliminating mental health services of any kind is a short-sighted, fool-hardy move which can lead to crisis and leaves our citizens at risk. We need your help to preserve mental health services within the state.

Sincerely,
Patsy Schumacher, LCSW
Greenwich Department of Social Service
101 Field Point Road
Greenwich, CT 06830
(203) 622-3719